GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6332
ANSWERED ON:12.04.2017
Internet Penetration
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the expansion of internet and broadband services in the country is in conformity with international standards/norms and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(b) the internet and broadband users in rural and urban areas separately, State/UT-wise;

(c) whether the Government has fixed any annual target for increasing the internet penetration across the mobile and broadband users in the country and if so, the details thereof including the said targets fixed for rural and urban areas, State/UT-wise and if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the gap in internet access rate of rural and urban areas during each of the last three years, State/UT-wise along with the steps taken/being taken by the Government to bridge the said gap in internet access rate; and

(e) the other steps taken by the Government to enhance the internet penetration across the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)

(a) There are no international standards/ norms for the expansion of internet and broadband services.

However, the Licenses granted to Telecom Service Providers require that for providing the Service the Licensee shall utilize any type of equipment and product that meets Telecom Engineering Centre (TEC) standards, wherever made mandatory by the Licensor from time to time. In the absence of mandatory TEC standard, the Licensee may utilize only those equipments and products which meet the relevant standards set by International standardization bodies as recognized by TEC and subject to modifications/adaptation, if any, as may be prescribed by TEC /Licensor from to time.

The specification prepared by TEC for equipment which can be used for providing internet and broadband services are based on international standard/ norms.

Telecom Service providers are providing their services within the scope of their licenses.

(b) As per the information furnished by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, the Telecom Licensed Service Area wise details of subscribers as on 31.12.2016 are enclosed as Annexure-I.

(c) As such, Government has not fixed any annual target for increasing the internet penetration across the mobile and broadband users in the country. However, National Telecom Policy-2012 envisages 175 million broadband connections by the year 2017 and 600 million broadband connections by the year 2020 at minimum 2 Mbps download speed. No separate targets have been fixed for rural and urban areas and State/UT-wise.

(d) As per the information furnished by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, Telecom Licensed Service Area wise details of Internet subscribers during last three years with rural/urban break-up are enclosed as Annexure-II.

In order to enhance the penetration of internet access rateand bridge the gap in rural areas, BharatNet project is being implemented to provide 100 Mbps broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.5 lakh) in the country by using an optimal mix of underground fibre, fibre over power lines, radio and satellite media.

The project is to be implemented in three phases. Under first phase of the project, 1 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs) are to be connected by laying underground Optical Fibre Cable (OFC). Under second phase, connectivity will be provided to remaining 1.5 lakh GPs in the country using an optimal mix of underground fibre, fibre over power lines, radio and satellite media, and provision of Wi-Fi Hotspots in all GPs in the country, which is targeted to be completed by December, 2018.

Till 31.03.2017, Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) has been laid to 90,027 Gram Panchayats (GPs) with a total length of 2,02,675 km. Out of these, 17,918 GPs have been provided with broadband connectivity.

(e) Government has allocated 965 Megahertz spectrum through auction in October 2016 to various telecom service providers for access services. This will enable the telecom service providers to roll-out services which will facilitate proliferation of high speed internet facility and enhancement of internet penetration across the country.

Annexure-I

Telecom Licensed Service Area-wise, Rural/Urban subscriber-base of Internet as on 31st December, 2016
[Subscribers in Millions]
<pre>
Telecom Service Area Narrowband Broadband Total
(Dec 2016)
Rural Urban Rural Urban Rural Urban
Andhra Pradesh 4.99 6.64 4.67 13.85 9.66 20.49
Assam 2.34 0.85 1.19 3.07 3.53 3.92
Bihar 6.99 5.77 2.63 7.40 9.62 13.17
Delhi 0.32 6.45 0.38 17.90 0.70 24.35
Gujarat 3.57 5.25 3.05 12.53 6.62 17.78
Haryana 1.42 1.61 1.78 3.77 3.20 5.38
Himachal Pradesh 0.91 0.63 0.75 1.13 1.66 1.76
Jammu & Kashmir 0.59 0.59 0.44 1.39 1.03 1.98
Karnataka 3.05 5.10 2.27 15.06 5.32 20.16
Kerala 2.08 2.61 3.78 7.68 5.86 10.29
Kolkata 0.16 3.46 0.33 7.08 0.49 10.54
Madhya Pradesh 4.98 5.14 2.06 11.31 7.04 16.45
Maharashtra 5.48 7.07 4.77 15.29 10.25 22.36
Mumbai 0.16 5.13 0.17 13.04 0.33 18.17
North East 1.20 0.76 0.84 1.67 2.04 2.43
Orissa 2.67 1.73 0.78 4.37 3.45 6.10
Punjab 2.47 3.37 1.67 7.85 4.14 11.22
Rajasthan 4.77 4.86 2.30 7.61 7.07 12.47
Tamil Nadu 3.26 7.68 4.02 15.76 7.28 23.44
Uttar Pradesh (East) 8.26 5.90 3.32 8.25 11.58 14.15
Uttar Pradesh (West) 4.74 4.67 1.88 6.95 6.62 11.62
West Bengal 4.02 1.76 3.57 6.47 7.59 8.23
Total 68.43 87.03 46.65 189.43 115.08 276.46
155.46 236.08 391.54
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Note: Data/information for Andhra Pradesh includes Telengana, Madhya Pradesh includes Chhatisgarh, Bihar includes Jharkhand, Maharashtra includes Goa, Uttar Pradesh includes Uttarakhand, West Bengal includes Sikkim and North-East includes Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland & Tripura states.

Annexure-II

Telecom Licensed Service Area-wise, Rural/Urban subscriber-base of Internet during last three years
[Subscribers in Millions]
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Telecom Service Area Total
(As on 31st Dec 2014) Total
(As on 31st Dec 2015) Total
(As on 31st Dec 2016)
Rural Urban Rural Urban Rural Urban
Andhra Pradesh 7.58 12.23 9.05 15.38 9.66 20.49
Assam 2.44 2.30 3.38 2.79 3.53 3.92
Bihar 6.93 6.95 8.43 10.00 9.62 13.17
Delhi 1.35 15.94 0.95 18.72 0.70 24.35
Gujarat 5.99 11.70 6.16 15.00 6.62 17.78
Haryana 2.85 3.07 2.96 4.50 3.20 5.38
Himachal Pradesh 1.39 0.98 1.73 1.15 1.66 1.76
Jammu & Kashmir 1.76 1.32 1.84 1.65 1.03 1.98
Karnataka 4.43 12.74 5.85 16.33 5.32 20.16
Kerala 5.23 7.08 6.14 8.25 5.86 10.29
Kolkata 1.06 5.86 0.55 8.48 0.49 10.54
Madhya Pradesh 4.60 9.24 6.37 13.08 7.04 16.45
Maharashtra 8.13 15.98 9.70 18.82 10.25 22.36
Mumbai 0.86 12.42 0.30 15.31 0.33 18.17
North East 1.60 1.69 1.96 1.74 2.04 2.43
Orissa 2.36 3.49 3.60 4.25 3.45 6.10

Punjab 4.49 6.62 4.56 8.45 4.14 11.22
Rajasthan 5.97 8.39 7.28 9.58 7.07 12.47
Tamil Nadu 6.10 16.00 6.86 20.41 7.28 23.44
Uttar Pradesh (East) 7.85 8.71 10.98 10.86 11.58 14.15
Uttar Pradesh(West) 4.39 7.18 6.15 9.48 6.62 11.62
West Bengal 4.81 5.34 7.36 5.27 7.59 8.23
Total 92.17 175.23 112.16 219.50 115.08 276.46
267.40 331.66 391.54
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Note: Data/information for Andhra Pradesh includes Telengana, Madhya Pradesh includes Chhatisgarh, Bihar includes Jharkhand, Maharashtra includes Goa, Uttar Pradesh includes Uttarakhand, West Bengal includes Sikkim and North-East includes Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland & Tripura states.
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